

BROWN DAILY HERALD
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Letters to the Editor

Casey

To the editor:

Last Thursday evening was the first time I have ever been embarrassed to be a student here at Brown. I was caught completely off guard by the behavior of many of those persons attending the lecture given by Director Casey. I thought I was having a bad dream! This couldn't be Brown University. This couldn't be the place where ideas, both popular and unpopular, are discussed openly in a calm, intelligent and scholarly manner. Alas, it wasn't a dream. It was Brown, it was ugly and it was embarrassing.

I realize that all of the Brown students didn't disrupt the lecture. In actuality, it may have been the actions of a select minority. However, I do fear that those actions did reflect poorly on all of us as a group. Mr. Casey couldn't possibly have come away with a very good impression of us or our university.

In an effort to be somewhat concise, I will try to sum up my feelings. I direct my words to those people whose outbursts moved me to pen and paper. Your antics furthered no cause. Your disruptions brought you no closer to your goals. Alas, you have not even enlightened us by the force-feeding of your views. Criticism, especially at a university such as ours, is not something to be muzzled. Instead, it should be nurtured. It is by the rigorous critique of new ideas that the cause of knowledge is furthered. Stifling Mr. Casey's speech under the guise of criticism does not qualify. The acts perpetrated Thursday by you seem to be precisely of the type

which you protest.

One final note. The majority of students here at Brown are intelligent, critical and discriminating. What in the world gave you the idea that we needed you as nannies to keep us from being duped by what you would call Mr. Casey's propaganda? If the feeble and juvenile conduct we witnessed Thursday evening reflects the extent of your powers of persuasion, I dare no one will ever be persuaded.

David S. Mandel '82

To the editor:

I am frightened by proposals to heighten surveillance of U.S. citizens at home and abroad, and I am frightened by the renewed cold war approach to foreign policy. What frightens me the most, however, is threats to our freedom of speech, such as this one Thursday evening at Alumnae Hall.

Freedom of speech is the right of every American, whether he or she be William Casey or a student at Brown University. To be well informed one must listen to all sides of an issue, and others must be allowed to hear the information as well.

There is need for confrontation on crucial issues such as those raised by the C.I.A. Expressing one's views through catcalls, hissing and interruption, however, is a breach of the First Amendment. It is rude and discredits the ideas of the dissenters.

The disturbance during Casey's speech did not enlighten anyone on the opinions of those opposing his views. It did succeed in violating his civil rights, as well as those of the audience trying to listen to him. It is through articulate questioning, the press, and constructive action that one is heard.

Debbie Crowell

To the editor:

I would like to respond to an accusation made by the dean of students John Robinson '67 against the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) at Brown (Oct. 16 Herald). It is an

accusation that borders on slander.

In discussing disciplinary action against students participating in a protest at the William Casey lecture, he "tentatively identified" protesters as members of the DSOC chapter on campus. He implies that this was somehow a DSOC-sponsored action.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Individual members of the group may approve or disapprove of the action, but no organizational endorsement was ever made. (We did, however, actively support the picket as DSOC).

Of the 20 people participating in the poem reading, two or three may have been DSOC members. But, if individuals belonging to an organization participate in an activity, this does not mean that their group is involved or even approves of the action.

Dean Robinson's accusation is an affront to the members of DSOC who did not participate or approve of the inside protest, and to individuals involved in the reading of the poem who do not want to be associated with DSOC.

Stefan Ferreira Cluver '83
Member, DSOC